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Founded in 1967 as *Negro American Literature Forum* by Indiana State University English professor John F. Bayliss, the journal has evolved through at least two distinct phases. *Negro American Literature Forum* bore the subtitle *For School and University Teachers* and drew its funding from Indiana State University's School of Education. The decided pedagogical focus of the six volumes of *Negro American Literature Forum* that Bayliss edited can be ascertained both by examining the character of the original scholarly materials he printed as well as by perusing the material which Bayliss reprinted from other publications because he deemed it to have particular utility for those involved in the teaching of African-American texts. The character of the publication modified under editor Hannah Hedrick (7.1-10.2) and interim editor W. Tasker Witham (10.3), neither of whom relied on reprinted material and both of whom placed increased emphasis on the critical analysis of texts. Both, however, left the journal's title and fundamental mission unchanged. Throughout the journal's time as *Negro American Literature Forum*, decisions on manuscripts were made in-house, although Charlotte K. Brooks, Virginia M. Burke, George E. Kent, and Charles Nilon served in titular capacities as an advisory board.

Upon assuming the editorship in the fall of 1976, I made a number of substantial changes in the journal's mission and organizational structure, while trying to preserve the strong foundation established by those who preceded me. *Black American Literature Forum* appeared in the winter of 1976 (10.4), sans subtitle. Although the School of Education graciously continued

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to provide administrative sponsorship of the journal through 1985, at which time it was moved to the College of Arts and Sciences, the fourteen scholars from across the country who joined me in making *Black American Literature Forum* a refereed publication in 1976 were interested in seeing it become one of the country's premier literary journals.¹ Today, supported by the professional assistance of forty individuals, and with an eight-year history as the official publication of the Modern Language Association's Division on Black American Literature and Culture, the journal would seem to have realized the goals established for it a decade and a half ago.

The eight-part index that follows offers a reference guide to the material printed during the first quarter-century of *Negro/Black American Literature Forum*'s existence. The first four sections—Articles, Interviews and Discussions, Bibliographies and Indices, and Reviews and Reviewers—list critical, theoretical, historicist, pedagogical, and related works. Creative works follow—Fiction, Poetry, and Drama. Rounding out the coverage is an extensive subject index. Hopefully these eight indices will facilitate access to the journal's contents between 1967 to 1991.

Note

¹Eight of the fourteen have remained with BALF throughout its fifteen-year history: William L. Andrews, Houston A. Baker, Jr., Richard K. Barksdale, Daryl Dance, Donald B. Gibson, James V. Hatch, Phyllis R. Klotman, and Charles H. Nichols. John F. Bayliss, Charlotte K. Brooks, Chester J. Fontenot, Charles H. Nilon, and Stewart Rodnon resigned after extended terms of service, and Virginia M. Burke died while still a board member in 1978.

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Marilyn Sanders Mobley

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